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turn of the complaint, and devise new means to entertain, to divert, and to cherish the glimmering spark of reason.

In cases of melancholy, it is found most material to draw the mind of the patient as much as possible from the subject of his depression; and hence persuasion and reasoning have seldom proved successful, but have appeared rather to rivet the false ideas more strongly.

It does not appear that more than one in sixty of the cases admitted into the Retreat has been produced by erroneous religious impressions; a tolerable proof that Quakerism, however it may influence the mind in other respects, has not a tendency to exalt the fancy to enthusiasm, nor to sink the mind into despair.

Of seventy cases admitted within a few years, 27 were men, 43 women; 51 single, 19 married; 44 old cases, 26 recent; 29 were cured, 19 died, and 22 remained.

Of 26 Melancholics—16 recovered.

Of 26 recent cases—20 were cured.

THOMAS HANCOCK.

London, March 14, 1812.

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*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

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THE Press has long been justly considered a most powerful and useful engine in the moral, political, and literary worlds. In the hands of the enthusiastic revolutionist or sectary, it may indeed be made to vomit forth fire and flame: but it may also be employed to quench the kindling flames of strife and discord, and to promote unanimity and peace. And in the hands of a free people, it always, in its general effect, tends to the benefit of the commonwealth at large.

In this paper, I wish to speak of its effects in our humbler department, as not affecting the grand interests of a nation, but the minor

concerns of civilized life. It is well known, that the papers of the Spectator tended to correct many lesser follies and absurdities in manners, conversation, &c., which could not so well have been done by any other method of instruction. That publication also occasionally aimed with great success at higher objects, and brought down religion from the clouds, to converse with men in the humblest spheres of life.

I would also occasionally claim the merit of being a Spectator of men and manners. Where I see error, I would wish to reform it; and when I discern room for improvements, I would gladly exercise my Spectatorial powers, for the benefit of all who may be interested in my remarks. At present, I aim at no very sublime object; yet I flatter myself, I shall, by writing this paper, merit the gratitude of that valuable race, the witlings and foplings of the day.

A topic which has lately occupied some of my attention, is elegance in conversation; and in the way of private admonition, I trust my instructions are not without effect. But as my influence this way is small, I wish to communicate my remarks, made in the course of my Spectatorial walks, through the extensive medium of a periodical publication. Attend, therefore, I pray you, all ye half-fledged birds of paradise—I mean, the gay water-flies of conceit and vanity, a friend will show you how to soar in conversation, above the ordinary race of mortals, and to spurn the beaten paths in which vulgar souls delight to tread!

There are to be met with in society, who figure well in conversation, from their possessing a rich fund of useful knowledge, and a noble simplicity and elegance in expressing their sentiments. The example of such persons is, no doubt,

to be respected. But at present I wish to call the general attention to nobler heights; and to show how even a mere stripling may occasionally make himself very agreeable in conversation, whether he has any knowledge or not.

For this purpose, I recommend to all who aspire after this perfection, to store their memories with a large collection of odd similes, metaphors, and explanatory common-place phrases, so as to have a suitable expression ready for every occasion. What a pity that we have no printed collection of such sentiments and phrases! Each person must do the best he can to collect—and it would be extremely useful to write them down as they may occur to the mind, that so they may be impressed upon the memory at leisure afterwards. A suitable expression of this sort adds wonderfully to the effect. A matter which in common phrase appears by no means interesting, immediately strikes, when set off with such embellishments. They shed, as it were, a glory round it. And then, no matter how grave the subject may be, an appropriate simile, may help to place it in a ludicrous point of view, to the no small edification and entertainment of the company. A few examples will set the subject in its proper light.

You speak of a person who is very economical in his mode of life. You describe him as one who wishes to make the most of every thing, and spends as little as possible. By this mode of describing, we understand you well enough. But if you wish to make a lively impression, you must do something more. You must call in some of the figures of speech to your aid:—for instance, you may add,—Why, in truth, he is so very niggardly, he would *skin a flint*. What a wonderful embellishment! But should you desire to be still more

elegant, you may subjoin, in a style of peculiar politeness,—In fact, he is so great a screw, that *—would drive a snail to Cork, and back again, for the hide and fat*. This is not merely beautiful, it is sublime!

If you speak of a very thin person, you cannot be at a loss for several elegant and appropriate phrases. You may say,—*He's as lean as Lazarus*. Here the Scripture allusion adds wonderfully to the force and beauty of the expression. Another not very bad, is,—*He's as thin as a whipping post*—a third, somewhat better, is,—*He's as lean as a church-mouse*. On the other hand, speaking of a fat person, you may say,—*Faith, that fellow has not been fed on deaf-nuts: O! what a head and pluck!* Elegant in the extreme!

If you propose exercising severity towards a person, you may say, with abundant delicacy and grace,—*O! I'll pull the worms out of his nose—or, I'll cut his corns*. Are you going to raise the rents on your tenantry? You have a metaphor at hand,—*On my word, I'll pull up their shirt-necks!*

Of a person addicted to drink, you may speak with an hundred allusions.—*He drinks like a fish.—He's as drunk as Chloe.—He holds to his head.—He turns up his little finger.—He's a six-bottle man.—He's as drunk as a lord, &c. &c.*

I once remember the solemnity of a funeral procession very agreeably relieved by a smart wag observing to the physician who attended, in a very audible tone of voice,—*Well, Doctor, you're going home with your work!* This stroke of pleasantry was peculiarly well-timed, and could not fail to please the good doctor extremely.

A lawyer who has little practice, may be described thus,—*He does not make as much as would powder his wig.*

Time, and the patience of the reader would fail, should I describe the occasions on which such strokes of pleasantry may be elegantly employed, I shall close this part of my admonitory remarks, with a few more common-place phrases. The reader's good sense will easily dictate their proper application.

*Thank you, good sir, I owe you one.—That's your sort.—I beg you may'n't mention it.—I sent him off with a flea in his ear.—The devil you would.—Too much cooking spoils the broth.—As ugly as sin.—As rich as a Jew.—As poor as poverty.—He's as great a rogue as ever ran over a hill.—You're only letting on.—He's as mad as a March-hare.—WELL, I will.—I would rather the dogs had it.—Butcher's dogs don't eat black-puddings, &c. &c.*

Now that I think of it, many very pleasant and elegant allusions may be borrowed from Cervantes. The comical squire of the knight of the woeful figure is extremely prolific in appropriate proverbs for all occasions. He has often even a rhetorical diabetes in this way; and is therefore well worthy of imitation, by all who would attain superior excellence in communicating their sentiments. I forbear mentioning any of the fashionable *Oaths*, lest my more scrupulous readers should be alarmed. But what man of sense will stick at nice distinctions in religion, when he may shine as a bravo or blood of the first order! Oaths judiciously selected, and pronounced with spirit, give fire to conversation. They are an elegant set off to every assertion, whether true or false. The gentlemen of the army, "full of strange oaths," have helped us greatly in this department. We are much indebted to their ingenuity and industry for the improvement of our swearing vocabulary. Surely the time will come

when we shall have such embellishments of speech digested into system, and taught at schools and colleges. The mechanical method introduced by Mr. Lancaster is very favourable for this accomplishment. But, unfortunately, it is altogether disallowed in his schools. Will no liberal man attempt a reform! Will no one help us to swear by word of command?

A. Z.

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*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

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**A**MONGST all the divers descriptions of incendiaries, for I may well use the word here, one species whose malign and dangerous breath is chiefly directed against the unwary *youth* of both sexes, has not in my opinion been sufficiently pointed out, by any of those writers who profess themselves the guardians of youth: I mean the Love Mongers or Match Makers, or whatever other appellation they may have; indeed, although they seem to be well known, and are often alluded to by moral philosophers, yet I have never met with a full account of the characteristic features of this species, by which they may be at once distinguished and discovered from all the numerous family of its genus, the busy body, to which it belongs. Nor do I mean to attempt the task, leaving it for abler hands, hoping that something may be done to prevent our sex in future from falling into the snares from which I have been with such difficulty extricated, not however, without much previous suffering.

I left school at sixteen years of age, and at once assumed the manners of a woman. Although I was not naturally of a very confident disposition, yet I was not allowed to suffer in my own